

NO DOUBT

10 STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH YOUR & OTHER PEOPLE'S DOUBTS



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What We Will Cover

- Metaphysical Backdrop
- The Nature of the Heart
- The Heart's Main Fitan
- Today's Crisis and Challenges
- The Source of Doubts
- Dealing with Your and Other People's Doubts
 - Be Aware
 - No Attention
 - Make the Distinction
 - Your Environment
 - Study Islam
 - Critical Thinking
 - Find a Specialist
 - Deal with Trauma
 - Focus on Your Heart
 - Make Dua



Prerequisites


- Stand in the possibility that you will change and your doubts will be gone.
- Do no superimpose intellectual / emotional baggage
- Understand the difference btw abstract knowledge vs. being
- Go through the full course
- Epistemic Duty / Intellectual humility

Metaphysical Backdrop

What is a Worldview?

worldview **noun**

 Save Word

world·view | \ 'wɜrl(d)-vyü  \

Definition of *worldview*

: a comprehensive conception or apprehension of the world especially from a specific standpoint

— called also *weltanschauung*

First Known Use of *worldview*

1848, in the meaning defined above

Taken from:

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/worldview#hl>



What is a Worldview?

A person's worldview represents his most fundamental beliefs and assumptions about the universe he inhabits. It reflects how he would answer all the “big questions” of human existence: fundamental questions about who and what we are, where we came from, why we're here, where (if anywhere) we're headed, the meaning and purpose of life, the nature of the afterlife, and what counts as a good life here and now. Few people think through these issues in any depth, and fewer still have firm answers to such questions, but a person's worldview will at least incline him toward certain kinds of answers and away from others.



Taken from: What is a Worldview? By James Anderson

<https://www.ligonier.org/blog/what-worldview/>

What is a Worldview?



Worldviews shape and inform our experiences of the world around us. Like spectacles with colored lenses, they affect what we see and how we see it. Depending on the “color” of the lenses, some things may be seen more easily, or conversely, they may be de-emphasized or distorted—indeed, some things may not be seen at all.

Taken from: What is a Worldview? By James Anderson <https://www.ligonier.org/blog/what-worldview/>

EVERYONE has a Worldview

وَلِكُلِّ وِجْهَةٌ هُوَ مُوَلِّيًا ۖ فَاسْتَغِيبُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ ۚ أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يَأْتِ بِكُمُ
اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿١٤٨﴾

“Everyone has a direction towards which he faces. So race to [all that is] good. Wherever you may be, Allah will bring you forth [for judgement] all together. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent.”

The Qur'an, Chapter 2, Verse 148

EVERYONE has a Worldview

“It is, the commentators point out, an observable fact that every traditional community has had a religious orientation of its own, whether appointed by Allah or chosen by itself.”

Shafi, M., Ma'arif al Qur'an

EVERYONE has a Worldview

Tafsir Ibn Kathir:

“Al-`Awfi reported that Ibn `Abbas said:

وَلِكُلِّ وَجْهَةٌ هُوَ مُوَلِّيُهَا

(For every nation there is a direction to which they face)

"This talks about followers of the various religions. Hence, every nation and tribe has its own Qiblah that they choose, while Allah's appointed Qiblah is what the believers face."

Abul-`Aliyah said, "The Jew has a direction to which he faces. The Christian has a direction to which he faces. Allah has guided you, O (Muslim) Ummah, to a Qiblah which is the true Qiblah." This statement was also related to Mujahid, `Ata' Ad-Dahhak, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas, As-Suddi, and others.

This last Ayah is similar to what Allah said:

EVERYONE has a Worldview

لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ
لَلَّهِ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ ۖ فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ ۚ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا

“...to Everyone We made a law and a method. Had Allah willed, He would have made you one nation, but [He intended] to test you in what He has given you; so race to [all that is] good. To Allah is your return all together...”

The Qur'an, Chapter 5, Verse 48

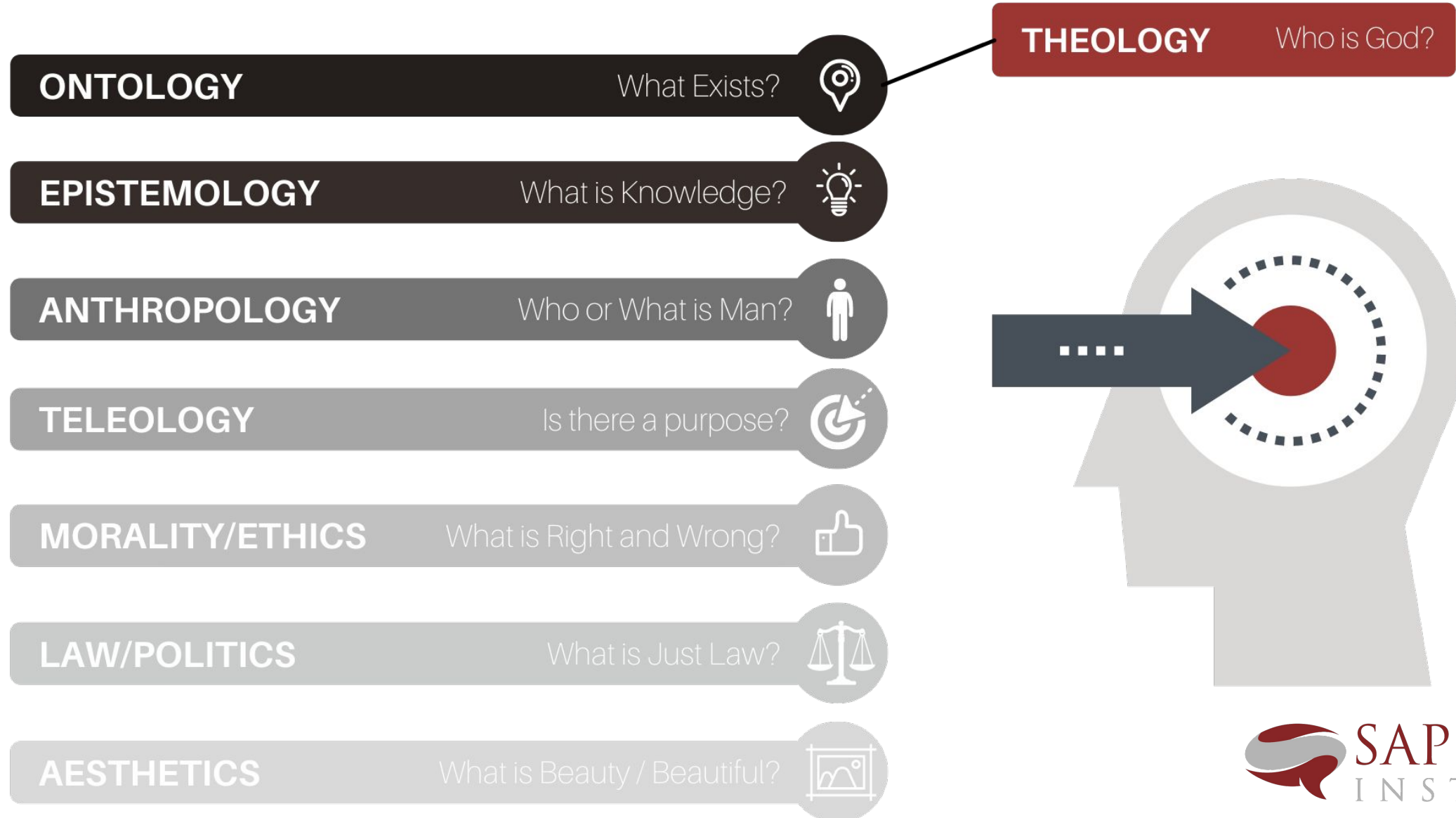
What is a Worldview?



Worldviews also largely determine people's opinions on matters of ethics and politics. What a person thinks about abortion, euthanasia, same-sex relationships, environmental ethics, economic policy, public education, and so on will depend on his underlying worldview more than anything else.

Taken from: What is a Worldview? By James Anderson <https://www.ligonier.org/blog/what-worldview/>

Main Components of a Worldview



Main Components of a Worldview

ISLAMIC WORLDVIEW		MODERN WORLDVIEW
	Ontology (+ Theology)	
	Epistemology	
	Anthropology	
	Teleology	
	Morals & Ethics	
	Law & Politics	
	Aesthetics	

Ontology

ISLAMIC WORLDVIEW	MODERN WORLDVIEW
GOD (ALLAH)	(?)
Unseen realm (‘ālam al-ghayb): angels, jinn, barzakh, ruh	(Supernatural world → denied)
Seen realm (‘ālam al-shahāda)	Empirical (“natural”) world
Resurrection & Judgement (al-ma’ād): Moral accounting, heaven/hell	(Identifiable eschaton → denied)
Cosmos, human life infused with purpose and meaning	(Objective meaning or teleology → denied)

Epistemology

ISLAMIC WORLDVIEW	MODERN WORLDVIEW
Revelation (wahy/tanzīl): Qur'an & Sunnah	-----
Sense experience (hiss)	Sense experience
Reason ('aql)	Reason
Report / Testimony (khabar/khabar sādīq)	Report (not conceptually central)
Fitrah / Spiritual intuition (hads/kashf)	First Principles / (intuition?)

Anthropology

ISLAMIC WORLDVIEW	MODERN WORLDVIEW
Body	Body
Mind / Heart (‘aql, qalb, fu’ād, lubb)	Mind
Soul (rūh) / nafs	(Soul?)
Language (central)	Language (not as central)
Morally responsible (mukallaf / taklīf)	Morally responsible being (incidental)

Worldview Revisited

One can think of a worldview as comprising a number of basic beliefs which are philosophically equivalent to the axioms of the worldview considered as a logical or consistent theory. These basic beliefs cannot, by definition, be proven (in the logical sense) within the worldview – precisely because they are axioms, and are typically argued from rather than argued for. However their coherence can be explored philosophically and logically.

See Entry under “Worldview”, Daniel Hill and Randal Rauser: Christian Philosophy A–Z, Edinburgh University Press (2006)



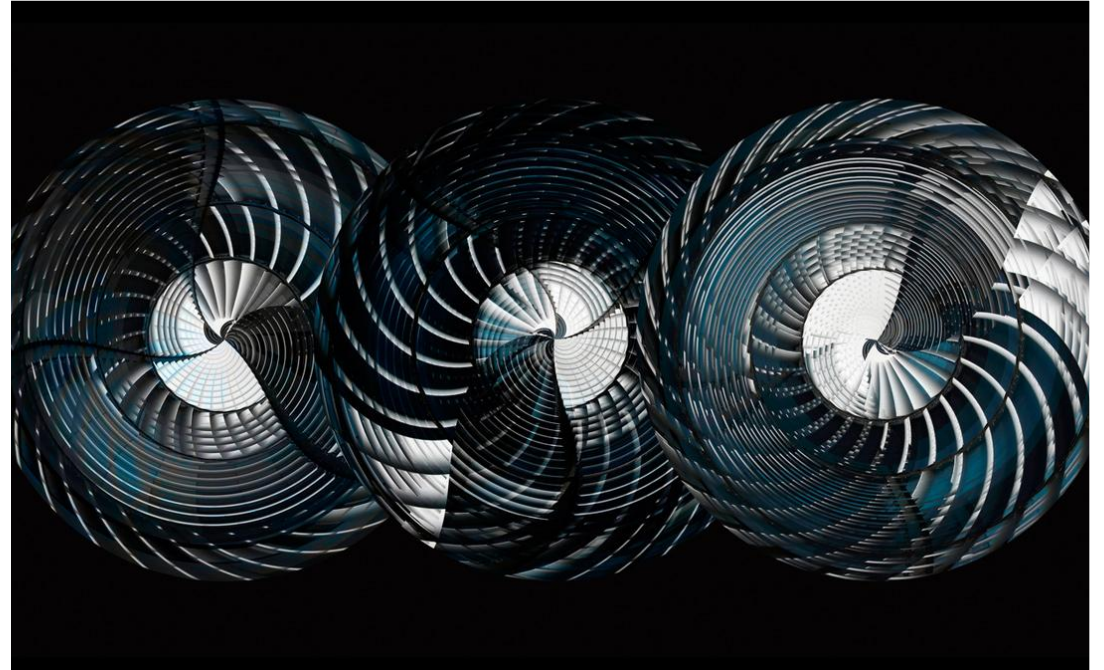
Rationality & Worldviews

“My worldview is based upon rationality, not fairy tales.”

Supra-Rational → فطرة

Rational → عقل

Irrational → غير عقلي



Innate Disposition: Fitrah

Working Definition: “*The original normative disposition*”

- “Original”
 - The word comes from the Arabic triliteral stem fa-ṭa-ra (ف ط ر).

أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

“Can there be any doubt about God, Creator of the heavens and Earth?” *The Qur'an, Chapter 14, Verse 10*

Innate Disposition: Fitrah

Working Definition: “*The original normative disposition*”

- “Normative”
 - The word is an اسم الهيئة
 - The way you do something or the way something is done. (e.g. “Qiblah”, “Khilqah”, “Jilsah”)
 - Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said “No child is born but that he is upon the fitrah. His parents make him a Jew, or a Christian, or Magian. As an animal delivers a child with limbs intact, do you detect any flaw?” *Sahih Muslim*

Innate Disposition: Fitrah

Working Definition: “*The original normative disposition*”

- “Normative”

أَفَمَنْ يَمْشِي مُكِبًّا عَلَى وَجْهِهِ أَهْدَىٰ أَمَّنْ يَمْشِي سَوِيًّا عَلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ
مُسْتَقِيمٍ ۚ

“Then is one who walks upside down on his face better guided or one who walks upright on a straight path?” *The Qur'an, Chapter 30, Verse 30*

Innate Disposition: Fitrah

Working Definition: “*The original normative disposition*”

- “Normative”
 - ...Then, Abu Huraira recited the verse, “The nature of Allah upon which he has set people,” (30:30):

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا
بَدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ
النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

“So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. [Adhere to] the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created [all] people. No change should there be in the creation of Allah . That is the correct religion, but most of the people do not know.” *The Qur'an, Chapter 67, Verse 22*

Innate Disposition: Fitrah

Working Definition: “*The original normative disposition*”

- “Disposition”

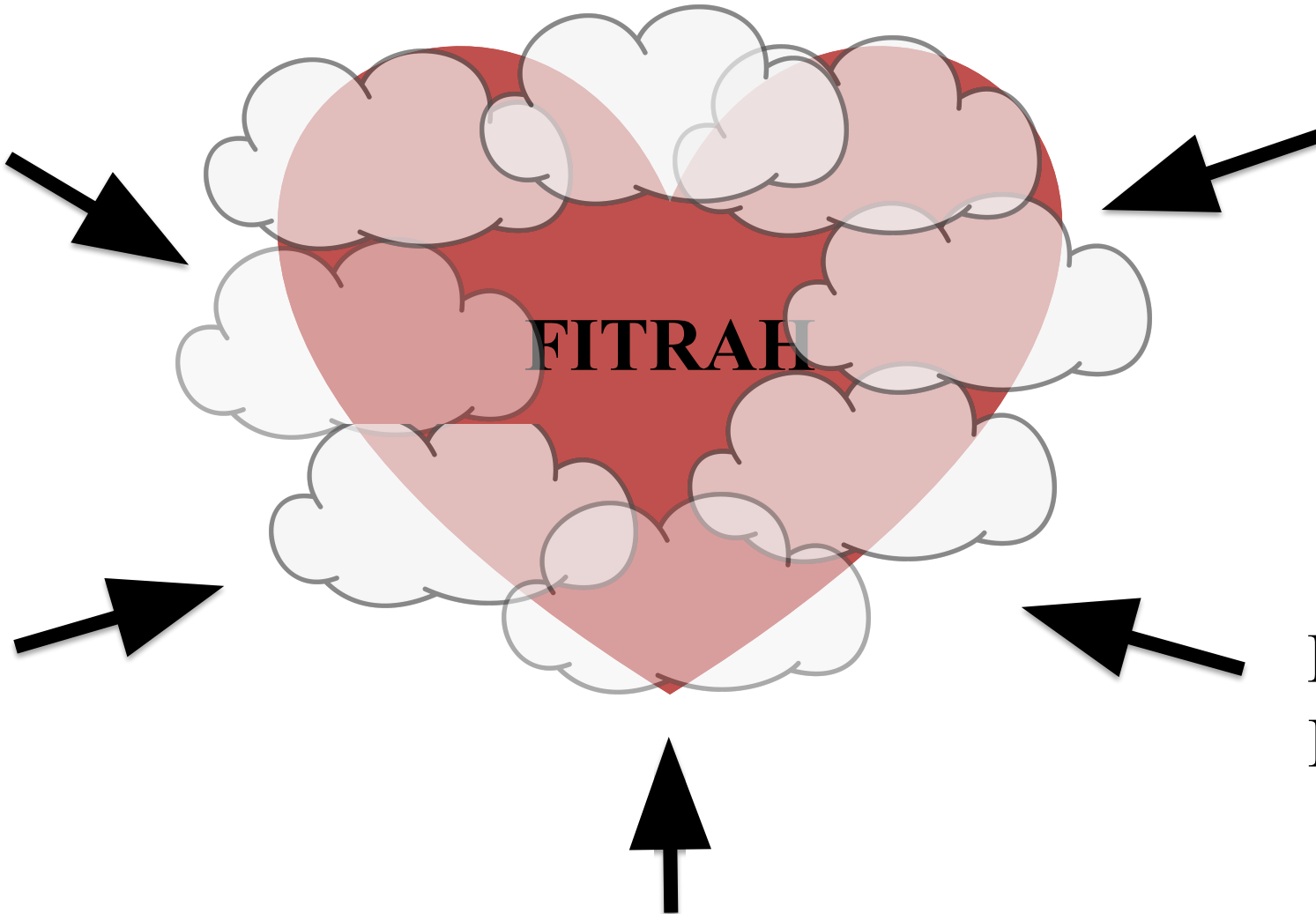
Two main views:

- The fitrah contains primary, inborn knowledge of: God’s existence, that He deserves to be worshipped, and some basic morals.
- The fitrah does not contain knowledge, rather it directs one towards the truth i.e. a ‘potency’ disposed towards the recognition of God, primed to worship Him.

Awakening the truth within

Revelation

Quranic beauty
Meaning
Verses
Tadabbur



Rational
Arguments

Experiences

Natural beauty
Trauma
Positive
experiences
Human
relationships

Reflection &
Introspection

Spirituality

Directing towards the truth



- Revelation
- Experience
- Rational arguments
- Reflection and introspection
- Spirituality

The Nature of the Heart

Its Nature

- The heart

- *Qalb*
 - *Qalaba*
 - *Taqallub*



- Comes from the root which means something that turns around and upside down.

Its Desired State

“The Day when neither wealth nor children can help. But only one who comes to God with a sound heart..”

The Qur'an, Chapter 26, Verse 88 to 89

“Truly in the body there is a morsel of flesh, which, if it is sound, the whole body is sound, and when, it is corrupted, the whole body is corrupted. Truly, it is the heart.”

Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim



The Heart's Main Fitan

Desires and Doubts



- Two main illnesses of the heart:
 - *Shahawāt*; desires.
 - *Shubuhāt*; doubts.
- “Fitnah is of two types: the fitnah of *Shubuhāt*, this one being the greater of the two, and the fitnah of *Shahawāt*.” *Ibn Qayyim, Ighāthatu Lafān Masāyidush-Shaytān*

Shahwat could lead to shubuhah. Drinking example eventually leading to try to justify.

Shubuhāt

- *Shubuhāt* (pl. of *shubhah*).
- Al-Fayyūmi said: “...a *shubhah* is called so because it resembles (*tushbihu*) the truth.” *al Miṣbāḥ al Munīr*: 1/358
- Ibn Taymiyyah noted the following: “Every significant belief usually contains an element of truth (*shubhah min al ḥaqq*), since if that wasn’t the case, such views would not have circulated...”
Jāmi’ ar-Rasā’il 2/401



There Will Come a Time...

Interesting Times

Abdur Rahman ibn Yazid reported: Ibn Mas'ud, may Allah be pleased with him, said, "The righteous will disappear and the people of doubts will remain." They said, "O Abu Abdur Rahman, who are the people of doubts?" Ibn Mas'ud said, "People who do not enjoin good and do not forbid evil." In another narration, Ibn Mas'ud said, "They do not acknowledge good, nor reject evil."

*al-Zuhd wal-Raqā'iq 1489. Rijal al-Sahih (narrators are reliable)
according to Al-Haythami*



Today's Crisis and Challenges

The Isms

- Atheism
- Scepticism
- Liberalism
- Extremism
- Postmodernism
- Nihilism



Sources of Doubt

Three Main Areas

1. Moral and Social Concerns
2. Philosophical and Scientific Concerns
3. Personal Trauma

Taken from: What Causes Muslims to Doubt: A Quantitative Analysis:

<https://yaqeeninstitute.org/youssef-chouhoud/what-causes-muslims-to-doubt-islam-a-quantitative-analysis/>

Moral and Social Concerns

1. Teachings about the role of women
2. The hypocrisy of religious people; that is, the nonreligious behavior of supposedly religious individuals
3. The bad things that people do in the name of religion
4. The intolerance that some religious people show toward other faiths
5. The way that religious people sometimes insist that there is only one “right” way to practice faith
6. The intolerance that some religious people show toward certain other people (e.g., homosexuals)

Taken from: What Causes Muslims to Doubt: A Quantitative Analysis:

<https://yaqeeninstitute.org/youssef-chouhoud/what-causes-muslims-to-doubt-islam-a-quantitative-analysis/>

Philosophical and Scientific Concerns

1. The debate over Evolution (through natural selection) vs. Creation (through God)
2. Uncertainty over the existence of God
3. The problem of evil and unfair suffering in the world
4. Feeling that certain religious beliefs or practices do not make sense

Taken from: What Causes Muslims to Doubt: A Quantitative Analysis:

<https://yaqeeninstitute.org/youssef-chouhoud/what-causes-muslims-to-doubt-islam-a-quantitative-analysis/>

Personal Trauma

1. Finding that being religious does not make one happy
2. Not feeling welcomed in your faith community
3. The death of a loved one

Taken from: What Causes Muslims to Doubt: A Quantitative Analysis:

<https://yaqeeninstitute.org/youssef-chouhoud/what-causes-muslims-to-doubt-islam-a-quantitative-analysis/>

Dealing with Your and Other People's Doubts

10 Strategies

STRATEGY	BEFORE	AFTER
Be Aware		
No Attention		
Make the Distinction		
Your Environment		
Study Islam		
Critical Thinking		
Find a Specialist		
Deal with Trauma		
Focus on Your Heart		
Make Dua		



1.Be Aware

Don't Drop Your Guard

Before the shubha

- Knowing that something presents a danger and that it exists allows you to not be a victim to its evil.
 - *Shubuhāt* exist.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ



“O you who have believed, persevere and endure and remain stationed and fear Allah that you may be successful.” *The Qur'an, Chapter 3, Verse 200*

Don't Drop Your Guard

Before the shubha

- Knowing that something presents a danger and that it exists allows you to not be a victim to its evil.
 - *Shubuhāt* exist.
- The *sahabah* (companions) were worried about *nifāq* (hypocrisy).
- Ibrahim (peace be upon him) supplicated to God to not worship idols.
- Prophet Muhammad ﷺ supplicated to keep his heart firm on the religion.
- Do not take *shubuhāt* lightly!

Lessons for You and Others

- Whilst swimming in the ocean of conflicting worldviews...



2. No Attention

Stop. Avoid. Ignore.

Before the shubha, and before it enters.

- Do not engage with media or platforms that give rise to *shubuhāt*.
- This does NOT mean that they are valid or have an intellectual basis.
- *Shubuhāt* are NOT strong. We just have weak hearts.
- *Shubuhāt* are like parasites that suck your imān.
- Prophetic advice is to RUN AWAY FROM THEM.

The Liar

‘Imran ibn Husayn reported: The Messenger of God, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “*Whoever hears news of the False Messiah, let him flee from him. By God, a man will go to him considering himself a believer, but will instead follow him because of doubts he will present.*”

Sunan Abī Dāwūd 4319, Sahih (authentic)

Shredded Faith

“Whoever falls prey to the claws of their doubts will have his faith shredded to pieces: whoever allows his heart to open to their vile tribulations will find himself a burning furnace! and whoever lends an ear to their deceptions will find them coming between him and firm belief. Indeed the corruption they cause on earth is a great but most people are unaware.”

Ibn Qayyim, Characteristics of the Hypocrites “Sifat Al-Munaāffiqīn”

If It Enters...

- Stop. Seek Refuge:
 - Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of God, peace and blessings be upon him, said, *“Satan will come to one of you and he will say, ‘Who created this and that?’ until he says to him, ‘Who created your Lord?’ When it comes to this, let him seek refuge in God and stop such thoughts.”* In another narration, the Prophet said, *“Let him say: I have faith in God.”* *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 3102, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 134*

Lessons for You and Others

- You dive into the sea....



3. Make the Distinction

3. Make the Distinction



3. Make the Distinction



Healthy Grapes



**Pokeweed -
Poisonous!**



**Chokecherry -
Poisonous!**

Whisperings

whispering (redirected from *whisperings*)

Also found in: [Thesaurus](#).

whis·per  (wĭs'pər, hwĭs'-)

n.

1. Soft speech produced without using the full voice.
2. Something uttered very softly: *overheard his whisper.*
3. A secretly or surreptitiously expressed belief, rumor, or hint: *whispers of scandal.*
4. A low rustling sound: *the whisper of wind in the pines.*

Whisperings

- Whisperings are thoughts that you do not agree with, do not believe and have a psychological aversion.
- This is a sign of faith.
- Do not act or talk about them.
 - It was narrated that Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) said: “Some of the companions of the Messenger of Allah, came to the Prophet and said to him, ‘We find in ourselves thoughts that are too terrible to speak of.’ He said, ‘Are you really suffering from that?’ They said, ‘Yes.’ He said, ‘That is a clear sign of faith.’” *Muslim*
 - It is narrated from Abu Hurayra (may Allah be pleased with him), who ascribed it back to the Prophet (may peace and blessings be upon him) that he said, “Truly, Allah has overlooked for my Ummah that which is whispered, or the which is thought about in the lower self, as long as they do not act upon it, or speak about it.” *Bukhari*

Questions

- Valid questions are not doubts that undermine your belief or lead you to distort Islam in someway.
- The *shahabah* had questions.
- We are not going to know everything. We have epistemic limitations.
- If we are sincere, believe in Islam and do not doubt the fundamentals, then questions are not doubts.
- Examples...



Doubts / Shubuhāt

- Falsehood that undermines the fundamentals of Islam or distorts the religion in any way.
- Be unsure about the truth of the fundamentals of the Islamic faith.



Lessons for You and Others

- Medical symptoms...



4. Your Environment

Social Conformity

Informational Conformity:

desire to be right

- This usually occurs when a person lacks knowledge and looks to the group for guidance. (*Christopher Browning, Ordinary Men - village of Jozefow/Epistemological biases - science/arts/culture*)
- Or when a person is in an ambiguous (i.e. unclear) situation and socially compares their behavior with the group. (*Diffused responsibility - helping a beggar/Kitty Genovese 38 witnesses*)
- This type of conformity usually involves internalization – where a person accepts the views of the groups and adopts them as an individual. (*Religion as taboo/Africa - atheists*)

Normative Conformity:

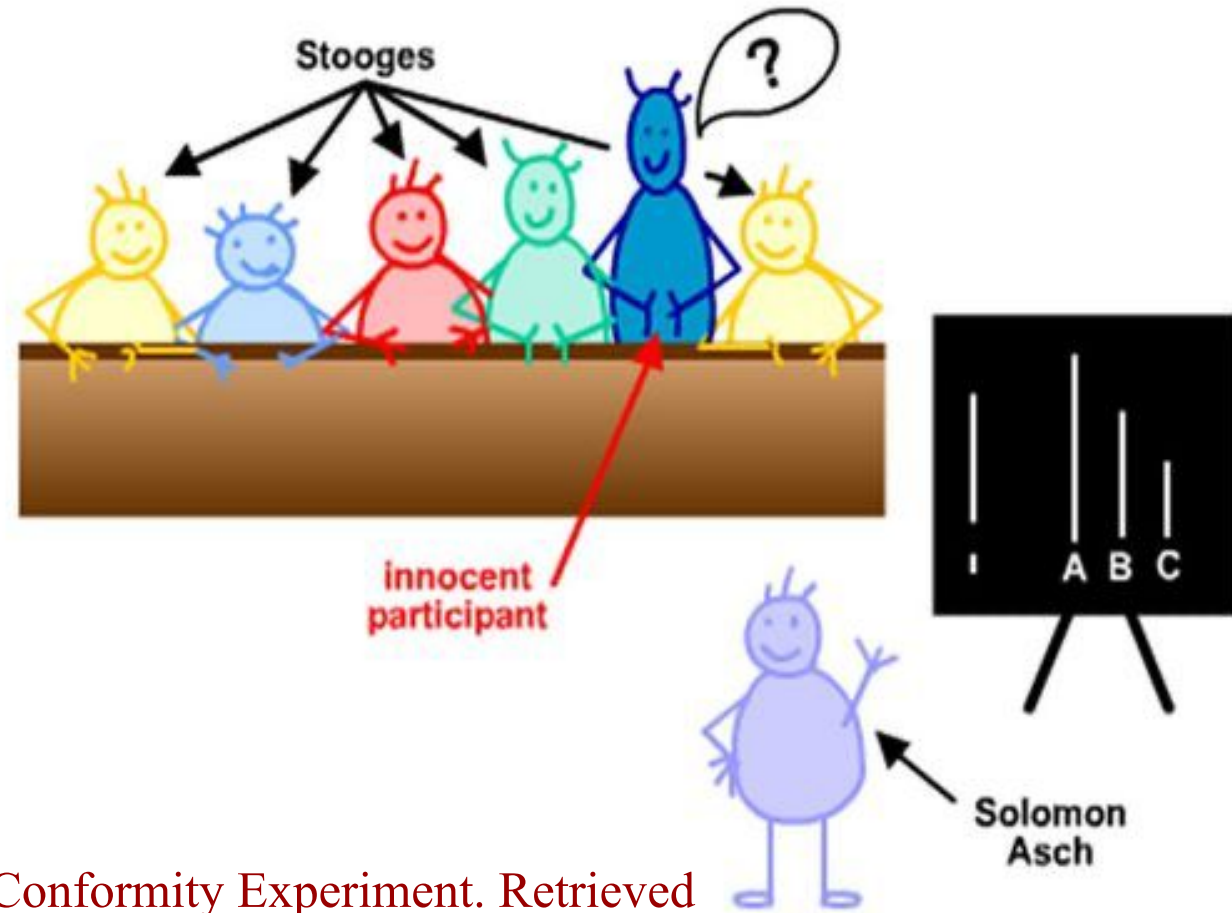
desire to be liked

- Yielding to group pressure because a person wants to fit in with the group. (*1955 killing of Sylvia Likens/betrayal of Husayn ibn 'Ali - karbala/Kufa*)
- Conforming because the person is scared of being rejected by the group. (*To avoid social punishment - peer pressures - school-teacher/bullying/tragedy of Rehtaeh Parsons*)
- This type of conformity usually involves compliance – where a person publicly accepts the views of a group but privately rejects them.

*McLeod, S. A. (2016, Jan 14). What is conformity? Simply psychology:
<https://www.simplypsychology.org/conformity.html>*

Line Experiment

- Solomon Ash, 1951
 - Study of 50 male students



McLeod, S. A. (2018, Dec 28). Solomon Asch - Conformity Experiment. Retrieved from <https://www.simplypsychology.org/asch-conformity.htm>; Asch, S. E. (1951). Effects of group pressure upon the modification and distortion of judgments. In H. Guetzkow (Ed.), Groups, leadership and men. Pittsburg, PA: Carnegie Press.

Jelly Bean Experiment

- A Jenness, 1932.



McLeod, S. A. (2018, Dec 28). Solomon Asch - Conformity Experiment. Retrieved from <https://www.simplypsychology.org/asch-conformity.htm>; Jenness, A. (1932). The role of discussion in changing opinion regarding a matter of fact. The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 27 , 279-296.

Eat Your Veggies Experiment

- Thomas, Ursell and Robinson, et al., 2017.



Thomas JM, Ursell A, Robinson EL, et al. Using a descriptive social norm to increase vegetable selection in workplace restaurant settings. *Health Psychol.* 2017;36(11):1026-1033. doi:10.1037/hea0000478

Quranic Advice

“And ‘beware of’ the Day the wrongdoer will bite his nails ‘in regret’ and say, “Oh! I wish I had followed the Way along with the Messenger! Woe to me! I wish I had never taken so-and-so as a close friend.”

The Qur'an, Chapter 25, Verses 27 and 28

“Do not mix truth with falsehood, or hide the truth when you know it. Keep up the prayer, pay the prescribed alms, and bow your heads [in worship] with those who bow theirs.”

The Qur'an, Chapter 2, Verses 42 to 43

“And keep yourself patient [by being] with those who call upon their Lord in the morning and the evening, seeking His countenance. And let not your eyes pass beyond them, desiring adornments of the worldly life, and do not obey one whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his desire and whose affair is ever [in] neglect.”

The Qur'an, Chapter 18, Verse 28

Why the Dog?

“And you would have thought they were awake,1 though they were asleep. We turned them over, to the right and left, while their dog stretched his forelegs at the entrance. Had you looked at them, you would have certainly fled away from them, filled with horror.”

The Qur'an, Chapter 18, Verse 18

- Why mention the dog?

- “Their dog was included in their blessing, so he slept as they slept in that situation. This is the benefit of keeping company with righteous people, so this dog was mentioned and was given status too.” *Ibn Kathir*

- Ibn Qudama al-Maqdisi: 5 qualities of a worthy companion

Prophetic Advice

- “A person is upon the religion of his close friend, so beware who you befriend.” *Abu Dawud and At-Tirmidhi*
- “The example of a good companion (who sits with you) in comparison with a bad one is like that of the musk seller and the blacksmith's bellows; from the first you would either buy musk or enjoy its good smell while the bellows would either burn your body or your clothes or you get a bad nasty smell thereof.” *Al-Bukhari and Muslim*
- “You will be with those whom you love.” *Al-Bukhari and Muslims, from the hadith of Anas*



Lessons for You and Others

- Playing Basketball with MMA fighters...



Other People

- Let us ask a question - how do we now help others?
 - Find out what areas of their social environment is leading them away from Islam, and damaging their heart and facilitating being infected with shubuhaat
 - Find or create an environment for them
 - Tolerance
 - Compassion
 - Wisdom
 - Maslaha and mafasada
 - Reap...
 - Every community is different

5. Study Islam

شبهاب\شبهه Etymology of

شبهه

1. The case of the consimiliar cows.

قَالُوا ادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ إِنَّ الْبَقَرَ تَشَبَهَ عَلَيْنَا وَإِنَّا
إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَمُهْتَدُونَ ﴿٧٠﴾



They said, “Call upon your Lord to make clear to us what it is. Indeed, [all] cows look alike to us. And indeed we, if Allah wills, will be guided.” *The Qur'an, Chapter 2, Verse 70*

شبهاب\شبهة Etymology of

شبه

2. “Locked in place”

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ
وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَبَهَ مِنْهُ

“It is He who has sent down to you, [O Muhammad], the Book; in it are verses [that are] precise - they are the foundation of the Book - and others unspecific. As for those in whose hearts is deviation [from truth], they will follow that of it which is unspecific...” *The Qur'an, Chapter 3, Verse 7*



شبهاب\شبهة Etymology of

شبه

2. “Locked in place”

أَبْتَغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَأَبْتَغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ ۚ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ
فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِهِ ۚ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو

الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٧﴾

“they will follow that of it which is unspecific, seeking discord and seeking an interpretation [suitable to them]. And no one knows its [true] interpretation except Allah . But those firm in knowledge say, "We believe in it. All [of it] is from our Lord." And no one will be reminded except those of understanding.” *The Qur'an, Chapter 3, Verse 7*



شبهاب\شبهة Etymology of

شبه

3. Fiqh at-tashabū

تَشَابُهَ VS. تَشَبَّهَ

“Whoever imitates a people is from them.”

Sahih wa Da'if Sunan Abi Dawood vol.9 pg. 31



Light as a parable



﴿اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مِثْلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكَاةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ
الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍ الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ
مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ
تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَضْرِبُ
اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَلَ لِلنَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ﴾

“Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The example of His light is like a niche within which is a lamp, the lamp is within glass, the glass as if it were a pearly [white] star lit from [the oil of] a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would almost glow even if untouched by fire. Light upon light. Allah guides to His light whom He wills. And Allah presents examples for the people, and Allah is Knowing of all things.”

The Qur'an, Chapter 24, Verse 35

Light as a parable



يَأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بُرْهَانٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُورًا
مُّبِينًا ﴿١٧٤﴾

“O mankind, there has come to you a conclusive proof from your Lord, and We have sent down to you a clear light.” *The Qur'an, Chapter 4, Verse 174*

Light as a parable



يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ
كَثِيرًا مِّمَّا كُنْتُمْ تُخْفُونَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَعْفُو
عَنْ كَثِيرٍ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ
مُبِينٌ ۝١٥

“O People of the Scripture, there has come to you Our Messenger making clear to you much of what you used to conceal of the Scripture and overlooking much. There has come to you from Allah a light and a clear Book.”

The Qur'an, Chapter, 5, Verse 15

Studying Islam vs. Studying....

Zayd ibn Arqam reported: The Messenger of God, ﷺ said:

“O Allah, I seek refuge in you from knowledge that does not benefit, from a heart that is not reverent, from a soul that is not content, and from a supplication that is not answered.” *Muslim 2722*

Studying Islam vs. Studying....

﴿٢٨﴾ إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ

“Of all of Allah’s servants, only the knowledgeable ‘of His might’ are ‘truly’ in awe of Him. Allah is indeed Almighty, All-Forgiving.”

The Qur’an, Chapter 35, Verse 28

Studying Islam vs. Studying....

أَمَّنْهُوَ قَنْتُءَانَاءُ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَائِمًا يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُو رَحْمَةَ
رَبِّهِ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو
الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٩﴾

“Is one who is devoutly obedient during periods of the night, prostrating and standing [in prayer], fearing the Hereafter and hoping for the mercy of his Lord, [like one who does not]? Say, "Are those who know equal to those who do not know?" Only they will remember [who are] people of understanding.”

The Qur'an, Chapter 39, Verse 9

Important Spiritual Prerequisite: Correct Intention

- It is reported that Ḥabīb b. ‘Ubayd – God have mercy on him – said: *Learn knowledge, understand it and benefit from it (live by it); and do not study it in order to decorate yourself with it, for if you live long you will likely see a time when knowledge will be used for beautification like a man beautifies himself with his garments.* *Ibn Al-Mubārak, Al-Zuhd wa Al-Raqā’iq no. 1056*
- Ayyūb Al-Sakhtiyānī reports that Abū Qilābah – God have mercy on him – said: *O Ayyūb, when Allāh brings about knowledge for you, bring about worship of him, and do not let your [sole] concern be to narrate it.* *Ibn ‘Abd Al-Barr, Jāmi‘ Bayān Al-‘Ilm, article 1279*
- It is reported that Ibrāhīm b. Adham – God have mercy on him – said: *Whoever seeks knowledge sincerely, for the servants of Allāh to benefit by and to benefit himself, then being hidden (from fame) is more beloved to him than seeking loftiness. He is the one who becomes more lowly to himself, strives more in worship, fears Allāh more, yearns for Allāh more, and becomes more humble amongst people. He cares not what he has of this dunyā night or day.* *Al-Bayhaqī, Shu‘ab Al-Īmān article 1653*

Dismantles *Shubuhāt*

- Knowledge dismantles *shubuhāt*.

بَلْ نَقْذِفُ بِالْحَقِّ عَلَى الْبَاطِلِ فَيَدْمَغُهُ. فَإِذَا هُوَ زَاهِقٌ وَلَكُمُ الْوَيْلُ
مِمَّا تَصِفُونَ ﴿١٨﴾

“In fact, We hurl the truth against falsehood, leaving it crushed, and it quickly vanishes.” *The Qur'an, Chapter 21, Verse 18*

Dismantles *Shubuhāt*

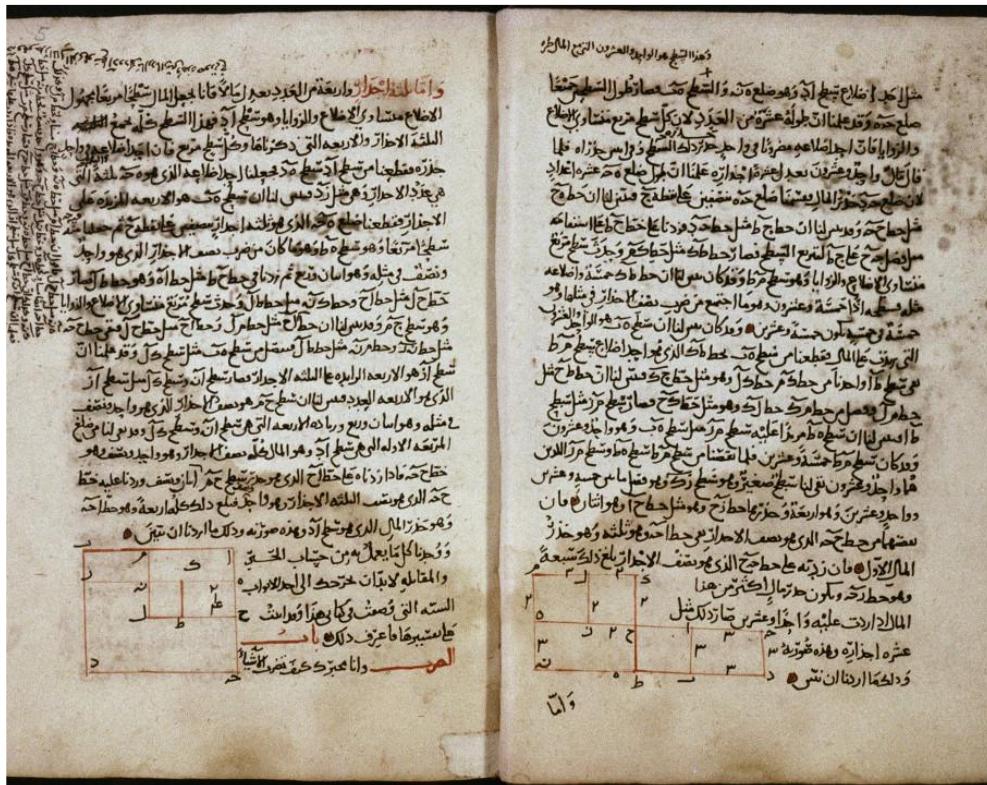
- Knowledge dismantles *shubuhāt*.

“Regarding the *fitna* of *shubuhāt*, this is due to having a weak vision and a lack of knowledge... This *fitna* is sometimes a result of incorrect understanding, misinformation...” *Ibn Qayyim, Ighāthatu Lafān Masāyidush-Shaytān*

Example 1: Women's Inheritance

- Human Beings use Heuristics to understand the world
- Did the Islamic civilization lack sophistication?
 - Language:
 - Ellipsis
 - “Actions are by intentions...”
 - General Cognition:
 - Romantic dinner experient
 - How to understand gender roles:
 - Women inherit half of what Men inherit.
 - Which heuristics are valid?
- Did the Islamic civilization lack sophistication?

Example 1: Women's Inheritance



The Compendious Book on Calculation by Completion and Balancing

Kitāb al-Mukhtaṣar fī Ḥisāb al-Jabr wal-Muqābalah

“Imam al-Ma’mun, the Commander of the Faithful....has encouraged me to compose a short work on calculating by (the rules of) completion and balancing, confining it to what is easiest and most useful in arithmetic, such as men constantly require in cases of inheritance, legacies, partition, law-suits and trade...”

Muḥammad ibn Mūsā al-Khwārizmī

Example 1: Women's Inheritance

- There are a number of criteria in determining the allocation of shares.
 - Proximity:
 - For example, the daughter of the deceased inherits half the estates than her grandmother would, whereas the deceased father is entitled to only a fourth.
 - Generational position of the heirs:
 - For example, a daughter will inherit more than her grandmother.
 - Financial burden and obligations
 - Social heirachy in Islam.
 - It is the financial responsibility of the father to provide for his wife and the wider family. The wife is entitled to her husband's wealth and her own personal wealth is her own and she has complete autonomy.

Consider This

1. There exists only **4** scenarios in which a female inherits half of a male.
 - For example, the presence of a daughter and a son, or indeed a granddaughter and grandson, in which the son (or grandson) will inherit twice as much as the daughter.
2. There are at least **11** scenarios where a female inherits the same share as a male.
 - For example, the inheritance of a mother and father, with the presence of the deceased son. In this case, both the mother and father will inherit $\frac{1}{6}$, whilst the son will receive the remainder.
3. There are **16** scenarios where a female inherits more than a man.

Example 2: Age of Consent

- False accusation that Islam facilitates child abuse.
 - Legal Maxims: Valid Heuristics
1. No harm and no causing of harm
 2. Certainty is not removed by doubt
 3. Hardship begets facility.
 4. Culture/Custom has legal weight
 5. Matters are based upon the intention behind them

Example 2: Age of Consent

- False accusation that Islam facilitates child abuse.
- *Usūlī* definition of harm:
 - Categorised in two distinct categories:
 - Mind (psychological; which is also contingent on sociological factors)
 - ‘*Urf* (social custom considerations)
 - Body
 - Physical wellbeing
 - Mental and Psychological well-being
 - Social acceptance

Aisha (رضي الله عنه) as a Case Study

- Mental and psychological well-being:
 - Aisha ranks as one of the most knowledgeable of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.
 - She was a prolific narrator of prophetic narrations; over 2210.
 - Al-'Ayni a commentator of Sahih al-Bukhari remarks, “*a quarter of legalistic judicial rulings present in the Shar'īah is by the way of Aisha.*” *B. Al-'Ayni, 'Umda l'Qari. Vol. 16, p. 250.*
 - Aisha was outspoken for her brazenness in voicing her opinions.
 - Based on her own words. Her marriage was based on love, dignity, respect and affection.
- Physical wellbeing:
 - “There is no harming and no reciprocating of harm.” *An-Nawawi, 40 Hadith.*
- Social custom and considerations:
 - No one accused the Prophet ﷺ of wrongdoing or going against social custom.

Anachronistic

- Social customs change. Many societies, including the in West, allowed marriage to younger women. The social conditions were different.
- Professor of history Margaret Wade Labarge: *“It needs to be remembered that many Medieval widows were not old, Important heiresses were often married between the ages of 5 and 10 and might find themselves widowed while still in their teens.”* *Margaret Wade Labarge. A Medieval Miscellany, p. 52.*
- Professor Richard Wortley and Professor Stephen Smallbone: *“In Medieval and early modern European societies, the age of marriage remained low, with documented cases of brides as young as seven years, although marriages were typically not consummated until the girl reached puberty... At the start of the nineteenth century in England, it was legal to have sex with a 10 year-old girl.”* *Richard Wortley and Stephen Smallbon. Internet Child Pornography: Causes, Investigation, and Prevention, p. 10.*
- We are here today because of such social practices. Self-defeating objection perhaps?

Anachronistic

- “Much of the tension in the investigation of age in the past arises from the assumption that we can link “biological” to “social” age...distinctions between the categories, particularly “child” cf. “adult,” are the product of the current limitations of osteological methods for age estimation in adults, and that using biological developmental standards for ageing results in the construction of artificial divisions of social and mental development between these categories...Also, in contrast to modern Western society where social age is closely linked to chronological age, in many “traditional” societies, stages of maturation are acknowledged in defining age...These stages take into account not only the chronological age but also the skills, personality and capacities of the individual.” *Siân Halcrow and Nancy Tayles, “The Bioarchaeological Investigation of Childhood and Social Age: Problems and Prospects,” Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory, 15:2 (2008), p. 203.*
- Traditional vs. Modern Societies

Arbitrary

- Secular law is arbitrary:
 - *New York*: is 18, but the law permits exceptions to that minimum age, allowing children age 16 and 17 to marry with parental approval, and 14 and 15 year olds to marry if they have permission from a judge in addition to their parents.
 - *North Carolina*: 14
 - *Scotland*: 16
 - *Columbia*: Marriage is legal at age 18. Boys over 14 and girls over 12 may marry with the consent of their parents.
- In one country you are legally married, in another it would be considered illegal and potentially paedophilic.
- No “universal age of consent”

Arbitrary



3 years old



55 years old

Harms and Benefits

“The defining principle (within the shar’iah) is that any harm is to be warded off, as long as it can be avoided, as the safeguarding of man and preventing harm from befalling upon him, in any way whatsoever, is a firm, established principle in Islam... All of the legalistic, juristic rulings are built upon achieving the benefits of the slaves (of Allah) and every right is stipulated with avoiding any harm.”

Muhammad Abu Zahrah. Al-Fiqh Al-Islāmī

6. Critical Thinking

What is critical thinking?

- Definitions of critical thinking correspond to generating, defending, and challenging arguments or claims.
 - So to critically think, you should be able to generate strong arguments, defend arguments, and challenge weak or false arguments.
- In the context of **generating good arguments** we should avoid errors in our reasoning. In other words, avoid logical fallacies.
- In the context of **challenging weak arguments** we should be able to recognise logical fallacies.
- An argument have premises and a conclusion.
 - The premises are usually the reasons people provide to why they believe in something or not.
- Premises can be challenged and fallacious arguments often have false assumptions.
- Conclusions can also be challenged. In other words the logically validity.

Logical fallacies

- A logical fallacy is an error in reasoning that renders an argument unsound and invalid.
 - Fallacies may not be applied in every case
- Formal and informal fallacies
 - Formal fallacies - these are errors of the validity of an argument. In other words the conclusion does not logical follow from the premises or is not supported by them.
 - All cows are omnivores
 - All rabbits are omnivores
 - Therefore all cows are rabbits
 - Informal fallacies - these take many forms and they often involve arguments based on irrelevant information or based on assumptions. And when they are examined are proven to be incorrect.
 - Here are some examples of informal fallacies...

Quran

- “He rebuked ‘them’, “Do you then worship—instead of God—what can neither benefit nor harm you in any way?” *The Qur’an, Chapter 21, Verse 66*
- “Shame on you and whatever you worship instead of God! Do you not have any sense?” *The Qur’an, Chapter 21, Verse 67*
- “When it is said to them, “Follow what God has revealed,” they reply, “No! We ‘only’ follow what we found our forefathers practicing.” ‘Would they still do so,’ even if their forefathers had ‘absolutely’ no understanding or guidance?”
The Qur’an, Chapter 2, Verse 170
- “Do they associate ‘with God’ those ‘idols’ which cannot create anything, but are in fact created.” *The Qur’an, Chapter 7, Verse 191*

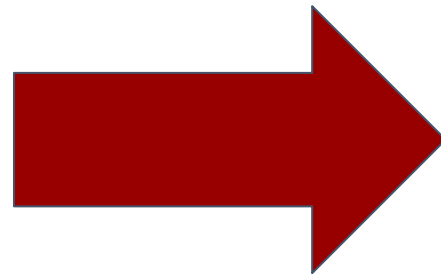
Keep on thinking!

- “God has never had ‘any’ offspring, nor is there any god besides Him. Otherwise, each god would have taken away what he created, and they would have tried to dominate one another. Glorified is God above what they claim!” *The Qur’an, Chapter 23, Verse 91*
- Argument from exclusion- dominant will
 - Two God,s
 - Move Rock
 - One wants to move the rock left and other right - one of them dominates and moves it in the direction they want
 - The other scenario is that they both cancel eachother out
 - The final scenario is that they both move the rock in the same direction all the time - one dominant will

How does critical thinking awaken the truth within?

- “And they will lament, “If only we had listened and reasoned, we would not be among the residents of the Blaze!” *The Qur'an, Chapter 67, Verse 10*
- “Surely in this are signs for those who reflect.” *The Qur'an, Chapter 13, Verse 13*
- “Do they not ever reflect on camels—how they were ‘masterfully’ created.” *The Qur'an, Chapter 88, Verse 17*
- “Do they not then reflect on the Quran? Or are there locks upon their hearts?” *The Qur'an, Chapter 47, Verse 24*
- “This ‘Quran’ is a ‘sufficient’ message for humanity so that they may take it as a warning and know that there is only One God, and so that people of reason may be mindful.” *The Qur'an, Chapter 14, Verse 52*

Reflection
Reasoning
Thinking



Truth

Necessary but not sufficient

Critical thinking & sources of doubt

- Let us apply of critical thinking to two main sources of doubts:
 - Philosophical and scientific
 - Moral and ethical

Philosophical:

If the universe needs a creator then who created God

This assumption false equivocates - makes the same the universe and God is some way

- It assumes God is began and is finite like the universe
- The universe requires a cause or creator because it began to exist and it is finite or contingent (it is not necessary - it could have not existed - and therefore it requires an explanation external to it)
 - God is finite by definition - He is uncreated - Saying that an uncreated creator requires a creator is paradoxical statement and has not logical value
 - 2. Also we have to understand that this falsely misapplies the principle of causality -
 - It is NOT whatever exists has a cause - it is whatever begins to exist has a cause - God never began to exist
 - 3. Finally, it is absurd say something created the Creator for everything that exists. That would involve an infinite regress of causes - which is impossible
 - Imagine God X created the universe, and God X was created by Y, and Y was created by Z and Z by ZX and that went on forever, we would never have the universe in the first place
 - **Because in order for the universe to exist in this scenario there would have had to be a completion of an infinite regress of causes, but an infinite regress of causes is never complete - meaning, it never ends.** And if it never ends the universe would never come into existence
 - Here is a scenario to make sense of this

Scientific-Science leads to atheism

- Doubts related to science and religion:
 - ***Science leads to certainty, therefore religion that goes against established science is false!***
 - Science does not lead to certainty:
 - The problem of induction.
 - Assumes that there are irreconcilable contradictions
 - Assumes science has higher epistemic value than scripture
 - ***Science works, therefore what it says is true, and any religious claims that go against science are false!***
 - Logical fallacy:
 - Just because something works it doesn't mean it is true.
 - “Historically, there are many cases of theories that we now believe to be false but that were empirically quite successful.” *Philosophy of Science, A Very Short Introduction, Oxford University.*
 - “False models can sometimes work better than true ones” *Evidence and Evolution, Elliot Sober.*
 - ***Scientific conclusions never refer to God, therefore science leads to atheism!***
 - Science does not lead to atheism:
 - Conflation between philosophical naturalism and methodological naturalism
 - “Of course the scientist, as an individual, is free to embrace a reality that transcends naturalism.”
Evolutionary Biologist Scott C. Todd
 - Science tells us the how not the why, knowing the how doesn't negate the why.

Problem of Induction

- “Science is revisable. Hence, to talk of scientific ‘proof’ is dangerous, because the term fosters the idea of conclusions that are graven in stone.” *Gillian Barker and Philip Kitcher. Philosophy of Science: A New Introduction. Oxford University Press. 2014, p. 17.*



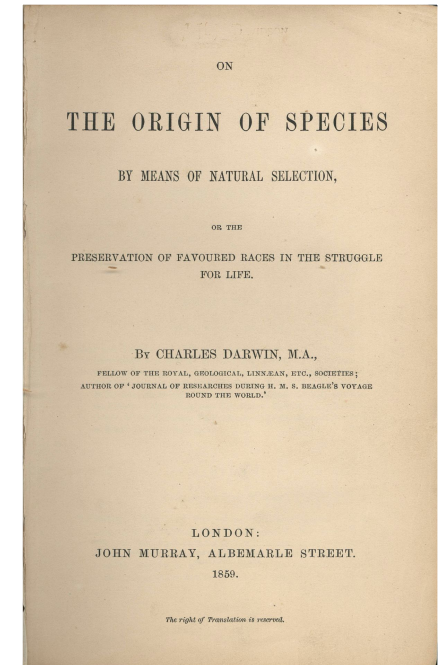
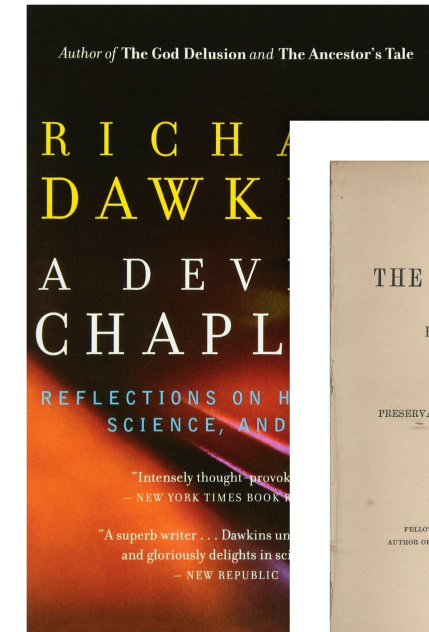
Change is Expected

“We must acknowledge the possibility that new facts may come to light which will force our successors of the twenty-first century to abandon Darwinism or modify it beyond recognition.”

Richard Dawkins, *A Devil's Chaplain*

“I am well aware that there is scarcely a single point discussed in this volume on which facts cannot be adduced, often apparently leading to conclusions directly opposite to those at which I have arrived. A fair result can be obtained only by fully stating and balancing the facts on both sides of each question, and this cannot possibly be done here.”

Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*



Picture vs. Pixel

- God is *Al-Hakeem* (The Wise) and *Al-Aleem* (The Knowing).
- His names and attributes are maximally perfect.
 - They have no deficiency or flaw.
- God has the picture we just have a pixel.

Islam and Science

- The scientific method has a **lesser epistemic weight** than Divine revelation.
- If Divine revelation cannot be reconciled with science.
- Then Divine revelation takes precedence over the scientific method.

“It is also important to note that scientific knowledge and Divine revelation have two different sources. One is from the human limited mind, the other is from God. **One would have to commit an epistemological disqualification to use scientific conclusions as a means to dismiss revelation.** We have a pixelated understanding of reality. Our knowledge is finite, God’s knowledge is not.”

The Divine Reality: God, Islam & The Mirage of Atheism

Ethical- irrational and backward

- Islam requires blind obedience to a God - therefore it is backward and oppressive
- It is irrational and backward to blindly obey someone
- Islam advocates blind obedience to God
- Therefore Islam is irrational and backward

False

- It is rational to unconditionally obey a maximally perfect being
- Islam advocates unconditional obedience to a maximally perfect being
- Therefore Islam is rational

7. Find a Specialist

Absence of Knowledge \neq Knowledge is Absent

- “Just because one does not know the answer to a question does not mean the answer does not exist.”
- There is someone in our community who has an answer.
- Rugged individualism - part of the modern worldview?
- “It should be immediately obvious that in the conditions of modern life we rely hugely on the epistemic and practical skills of others.... For example, I allow my car mechanic to find out what the fault is with my car when it won’t start and then to fix it for me and one relies on one’s doctor to use information from symptoms and medical tests to diagnose what is wrong with one and then to prescribe an appropriate treatment.” *Elizabeth Fricker, Should we worry about losing skills to robots?*” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jsZRfT3G7nM>

Absence of Knowledge \neq Knowledge is Absent

- Especially true when it comes to shubuhah! Example: A question about a hadith and a scholar could just clarify it because of his/her epistemic skill set.
- Polymaths are rare. Knowledge has become narrow and deep as opposed to broad and shallow.
- This is linked to other strategies e.g. Your environment, study Islam, Dealing with Trauma
- Therefore, Find a specialist!

Absence of Knowledge ≠ Knowledge is Absent

الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ

“The believers, both men and women, support each other...” *The Qur'an, Chapter 9, Verse 71*

Absence of Knowledge ≠ Knowledge is Absent

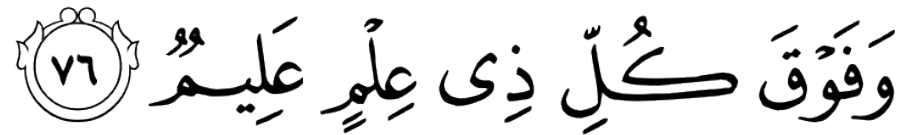
- *The cure to ignorance is to ask and learn -*

فَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٤٣﴾

“ask those who have knowledge if you do not know.” *The Qur'an, Chapter 16, Verse 43*

Absence of Knowledge ≠ Knowledge is Absent

Our epistemic questions - limitations, ignorance and authority -



“Above everyone who has knowledge there is the One who is all knowing.” *The Qur'an, Chapter 12, Verse 76*

- God and the angels/Adam
- “Seeking of knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim male and female.”

From Sunan Ibn Majah, narrated from Anas bin Malik

8. Dealing with Trauma

Trauma

- “Everything around me is Falling Apart”
- “How Can I Ever Trust anyone Again?”
- “Why Bother Living if the Future is Filled with Pain?”
- “Why Do Bad Things Always Happen to Me?”



Trauma

- What is Trauma?
- How is Trauma a cause for Shubuhahat
- General Strategy for dealing with Trauma
- Disclaimer
- Seek Muslim Professional help



What is Trauma?

“Trauma can provoke a wide range of ideas, but if you are like most people the clinical term feels exceptional and uncommon, and like something that doesn’t happen to average people like us. But what if you don’t need to travel to different corners of the world to bear witness to experienced trauma?...

Contrary to the images of trauma we discussed before, like war and violence, these more commonly experienced traumatic incidents included emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, domestic violence, household substance abuse, household mental illness, parental separation/divorce, incarceration of a household member, emotional neglect, and physical neglect. When you walk down the street, two out of every three people you pass by has experienced at least one of these significant traumas during their childhood. These substantial traumas are sometimes called ‘big T’ traumas.”

Your Lord Has Not Forsaken You: Addressing the Impact of Trauma on Faith
by Najwa Awad and Sarah Sultan

Why trauma leads to doubts

Shubuhat not a result of an intellectual doubt but more tied to a negative experience they had or trauma.

People's professional experience, trauma has led to doubts. For example:

- Parents hypocrisy related to disbelief
Who you are affects your child

“People tend to become atheists at a younger age when their religious parents talk the talk but don't walk the walk...” *Dolan, Eric W. “How Parents Act on Their Religious Beliefs Linked to the Onset of Atheism in Their Children.” PsyPost. August 26, 2018.*

General Strategy

A general strategy in dealing with negative experiences of trauma is to stand in the possibility that the meaning they are giving this trauma is not the only meaning. For example, suggesting more empowering meaning of the trauma can be a way of:

- Making us realise we have strengths we never thought we had
- Bring us closer with loved ones or create profound new relationships
- Evoke gratitude and greater appreciation for life
- Reinforce or change our beliefs
- Make us realise that we have, and can pursue, new possibilities

“If you find meaning in your suffering, then your suffering is no longer suffering”

- Victor Frankle (holocaust survivor)

Our suggestion is to give it the meaning that Allah gives it.

Disclaimer

We are not giving medical or counselling advice. If you are experiencing medical or psychological issues, please reach out to a professional.

As part of this strategy we strongly recommend that you seek professional advice in dealing with trauma.

Not going to deal with all trauma in detail but just present an overall strategy in relation to destructive doubts. This is something you should explore further and if you are dealing with someone else's doubts, have them explore it further.

Trauma

- The Meaning you are giving the trauma may be incorrect and the true meaning comes from revelation.
- Understanding existential questions and worldviews (changing qiblah/direction)

Ontology: Does God exist? Does the world exist?

Epistemology: How do we know? What are the sources of knowledge?

Teleology: What is the purpose of life?

“He who has a “why” can bear any “how”” -

Nietzsche



Changing the Meaning

Compassion / Empathy

Trauma may help us develop empathy.

Jesus said, *“People are either living in times of ease and well-being or facing tribulation, so be merciful to those who are facing tribulation and thank Allah for your own well-being.”* (Malik)

“By the morning brightness” *Surah al-Duha*

"The **night** is **darkest** just before the dawn" - The **Dark Knight** (Harvey Dent)

The Prophet (sws) was an orphan and was reminded of that.

Change the Meaning

The temporary nature of this world

- According to the Islamic tradition God has created us so that we may worship and draw near to Him.
 - A fundamental principle concerning this is that we must detach ourselves from the ephemeral nature of the world.
 - Suffering shows us how truly low the dunyā is, thereby facilitating our detachment from it. Thus we are able to draw closer to God.
 - The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was reported to have said that, “Love of the dunyā is the root of all evil.” *Bayhaqi's Shu'ab al-Iman*

أَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهُمْ زِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ
فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاهُهُ ثُمَّ يَهْبِجُ

Quran 57:20

General Strategy

Increased personal strength

Before enduring particularly difficult circumstances, you may have thought that everything you are currently handling would have been impossible for you. Once you've been through tremendous hardships, future challenges do not seem as daunting.

- “The Stimulus for the lobster to grow is that it feels uncomfortable.” If the pain was numbed, the lobster would never grow. “Times of stress are also signals for growth.”
- Salahudeen wanted to be a scholar!

General Strategy

- Greater spiritual development – Going through suffering can result in a sense of spiritual and religious renewal and a greater sense of closeness to Allah ﷻ. When our priorities change, God becomes a more integral part of our daily lives, which adds to a sense of stability and growth.
- Man in silicon valley
 - You are impoverished before Allah...
- “Whoever makes the Hereafter his most important matter, Allah will settle his affairs and make him content in his heart and the world will come to him although he does not want it.”



Sunan Ibn Mājah 4105

Change the Meaning

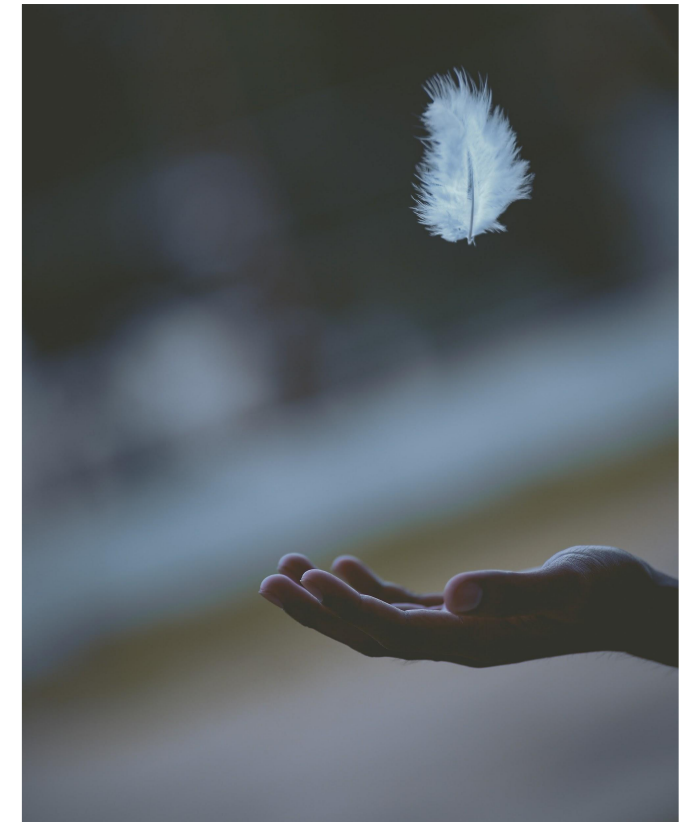
- Our negative meaning - based upon worldview?
- Money = Value
- Allah's meaning

فَأَمَّا الْإِنْسَنُ إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ رَبُّهُ فَأَكْرَمَهُ، وَنَعَّمَهُ، فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَكْرَمَنِ ۝
وَأَمَّا إِذَا مَا ابْتَلَاهُ فَقَدَرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقَهُ، فَيَقُولُ رَبِّي أَهَنِ ۝

And as for man, when his Lord tries him and [thus] is generous to him and favors him, he says, "My Lord has honored me."
But when He tries him and restricts his provision, he says, "My Lord has humiliated me." 89:15-16

Change the Meaning

- “Surely with every difficulty there is relief.
Surely with every difficulty there is relief.” *The Qur'an, Chapter 94, Verse 5 and 6*
- “Anyone who dies of the plague is a martyr.
Anyone who dies of a stomach illness is a martyr.
Anyone who drowns is a martyr.” *Sahih Muslim*
- “Nothing afflicts the believer, whether fatigue, grief, disease - even a worry that concerns him - except that by it, Allah removes something from his bad deeds.” *Narrated by Tirmidhi*



Change the Meaning

- “Do you think that you will enter paradise without any trials while you have known the examples of those who passed away before you? They were afflicted with suffering and adversity and were so violently shaken up that even the Prophet and the believers with him cried out: ‘When will God’s help come?’ Be aware, God’s help is close.” *The Qur’an, Chapter 2, Verse 214*
- All believers who suffered will be granted eternal bliss, and all the suffering they had – even if they suffered all of their life – would be forgotten forever.
 - The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said, “Then the person who had suffered the most affliction in the world of those destined for Paradise will be brought forth and merely dipped into Paradise for a moment. Then he will be asked ‘O son of Adam, have you ever seen suffering? Have you ever experienced hardship in your life?’ He will reply ‘No my Lord, by God. I have never undergone suffering. I have never seen hardship.’” *Sahih Muslim*

Change the Meaning

ISLAMIC WORLDVIEW		MODERN WORLDVIEW
Does God Exist? Yes Who is God? Al-Hakim, Al-Malik, etc.	Ontology (+ Theology)	Does God Exist? ----
Does the World Exist? Yes World is a place of trials.	Ontology	Does the World Exist? Yes World is meaningless, an accident.
Sources of Knowledge: Revelation + External World What is the meaning of Trauma? → Revelation	Epistemology	Source of Knowledge: External World only What is the meaning of Trauma? → ?
What/Who is the Human Being? → Soul + Body Does a Human have value? Yes from God	Anthropology	What/Who is the Human Being? Body Does a Human have value? ----
Is there a purpose? Yes. To Worship Allah.	Teleology	Is there a purpose? ---

Example

“On the contrary, if the universe were just electrons and selfish genes, meaningless tragedies like the crashing of this bus are exactly what we should expect, along with equally meaningless good fortune. Such a universe would be neither evil nor good in intention. It would manifest no intentions of any kind. In a universe of blind physical forces and genetic replication, some people are going to get hurt, other people are going to get lucky, and you won’t find any rhyme or reason in it, nor any justice. The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but blind, pitiless indifference.”

Richard Dawkins, River Out of Eden

“Your pain and suffering will be rewarded with eternal bliss in paradise. If you suffered for an whole lifetime and you were dipped in paradise for a moment you would feel that you have never suffered. Evil and suffering exists to test you, elevate you and facilitate a higher spiritual state. It is meant to bring you closer to the Divine, therefore closer to paradise. As a believer, any pain or suffering is a means to absolve you from your shortcomings and sins. When you are tested with evil and suffering it is a sign of Divine love, for He knows you have the ability to overcome the trials in your life. He knows you better than you know yourself.”

A Muslim

9. Focus on Your Heart

Working towards a firm Heart

“After I began to present to him one allegation after another, Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah be pleased with him, advised me as follows:

‘Do not allow your heart to be a sponge for every doubt and allegation so that it drinks them up and is moistened with nothing else. Instead, make your heart like solid glass; doubts pass over its surface but do not settle on the inside. Thus, the doubts are seen through the clearness of the glass, but are repelled by its firmness. Otherwise, if you allow your your heart to drink every doubt you encounter, it will end up affirming them,’ Or he said something to that effect. I do not know of any advice that has brought me greater benefit in fending off doubts than this one.”

Ibn al-Qayyim, Miftah Dar al-Sa’adah, (Mecca: Dar Alam al-Fawa’id 2010), vol. 1, p. 395

Who are YOU?

“Islamic Pneumatology”



وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ نَسُوا اللَّهَ فَأَنْسَاهُمْ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ
الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿١٩﴾

“And be not like those who forgot Allah , so He made them forget themselves.
Those are the defiantly disobedient.” *Qur'an 59:19*

Thinking with the Heart?



أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَتَكُونَ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ يَعْقِلُونَ بِهَا أَوْ آذَانٌ
يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَكِنْ تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبُ الَّتِي فِي
الصُّدُورِ ﴿٤٦﴾

“So have they not traveled through the earth and have hearts by which to reason and ears by which to hear? For indeed, it is not eyes that are blinded, but blinded are the hearts which are within the breasts.” *Qur'an 22:46*

Thinking with the Heart?

Narrated: An-Numan bin Bashir who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say:

“Truly, what is lawful is evident, and what is unlawful is evident, and in between the two are matters which are doubtful which many people do not know. He who guards against doubtful things keeps his religion and honour blameless, and he who indulges in doubtful things indulges in fact in unlawful things, just as a shepherd who pastures his flock round a preserve will soon pasture them in it. Beware, every king has a preserve, and the things Allah has declared unlawful are His preserves. **Beware, in the body there is a flesh; if it is sound, the whole body is sound, and if it is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt, and behold, it is the heart.**”

Al-Bukhari and Muslim



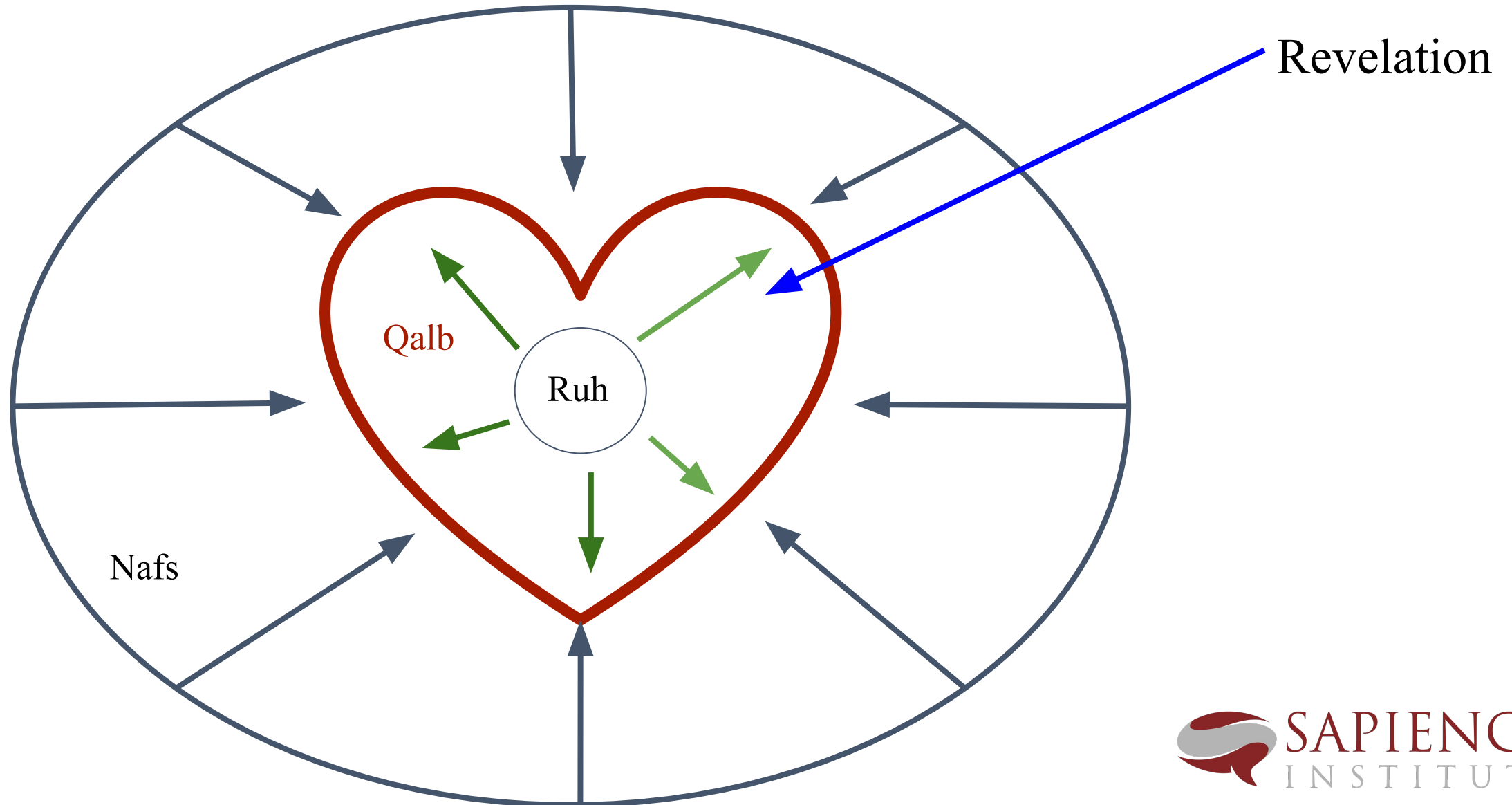
The Connection between Doubts & Spirituality

❖ اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مِثْلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكَاةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ
الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍ الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ
مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ
تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَضْرِبُ
اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَلَ لِلنَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣٥﴾



“Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The example of His light is like a niche within which is a lamp, the lamp is within glass, the glass as if it were a pearly [white] star lit from [the oil of] a blessed olive tree, neither of the east nor of the west, whose oil would almost glow even if untouched by fire. Light upon light. Allah guides to His light whom He wills. And Allah presents examples for the people, and Allah is Knowing of all things.” *Qur'an 24:35*

The Connection between Doubts & Spirituality



Covered Hearts

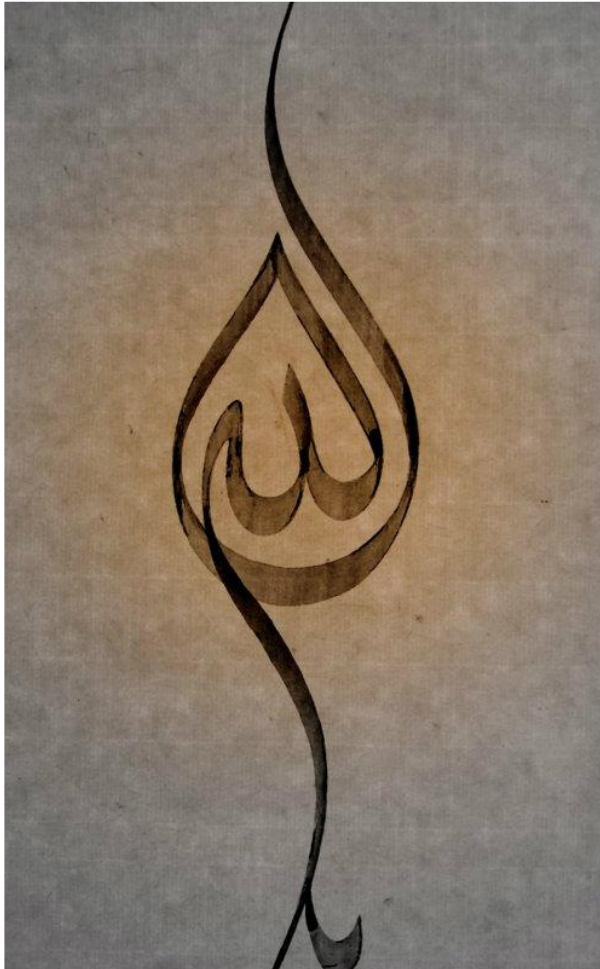
Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“Verily, when the servant commits a sin, a black mark appears upon his heart. If he abandons the sin, seeks forgiveness, and repents, then his heart will be polished. If he returns to the sin, the blackness will be increased until it overcomes his heart. It is the covering that Allah has mentioned:

No, rather a covering is over their hearts from what they have earned.” (Qur’an 22:46) Sunan al-Tirmidhī 3334



Cleaning the Heart: *Knowing Allāh*



إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ غَفُورٌ ﴿٢٨﴾

“Only those fear Allah , from among His servants, who have knowledge. Indeed, Allah is Exalted in Might and Forgiving.”

Qur'an 35:28

- Who is Allah?
- What is ‘Worship’?
- Why is Allah worthy of worship?
- Can you love someone you don't know?

Cleaning the Heart: *Spiritual Diseases*

Ego / Arrogance (Takabbur)



It was narrated from ‘Abd-Allaah ibn Mas’ood that the Prophet ﷺ said: **“No one who has an atom’s-weight of arrogance in his heart will enter Paradise.”**

A man said, “O Messenger of Allah, what if a man likes his clothes and his shoes to look good?”

He said, **“Allah is Beautiful and loves beauty. Arrogance means rejecting the truth and looking down on people.”** *Sahih Muslim*

Cleaning the Heart: *Spiritual Diseases*

Ego / Arrogance (Takabbur)



- Death
- Understanding Allah's greatness & our dependency upon Him
- Understanding our limitations

Cleaning the Heart: *Dhikr*



Al-Bayhaquee relates from Ibn ‘Umar that Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

“For everything there is a polish, and the polish for the hearts is the dhikr (remembrance) of Allah. There is nothing more potent in saving a person from the punishment of Allah than the dhikr of Allah.” It was said: Not even Jihaad in the path of Allah? So he replied: **“Not even if you were to continue striking with your sword until it breaks.”**

Saheeh: Related by Ahmad (4/352), from Mu’aadh ibn Jabal radiallaahu ‘anhu. It was authenticated by al-Albaanee in Saheehul-Jaami’ (no.5644)

Cleaning the Heart: *Dhikr*

Whoever neglects [remembering Allah] most of the time, then his heart will become rusty in accordance with how neglectful the person is. And when this [filthy] rust accumulates on the heart, then it no longer recognises things as they really are. Thus, it views falsehood as if it is the truth, and truth as if it is falsehood. This is because this rust darkens and confuses the heart's perception, and so it is unable to truly recognise things for what they really are. So as the rust accumulates, the heart gets blackened, and as this happens the heart becomes stained with this filthy rust, and when this occurs it corrupts the heart's perception and recognition of things. The heart [then] does not accept the truth nor does it reject falsehood, and this is the greatest calamity that can strike the heart. Being neglectful [of dhikr] and following of whims and desires is a direct consequence of such a heart, which [further] extinguish the heart's light and blinds its vision. Allah – the Most High – said:

“And do not obey him whose heart We have made to be neglectful of Our remembrance, one who follows his own whims and desires and whose affairs are furat [have gone beyond bounds and whose deeds have been lost].” *Qur'an 18:28*

Ibn al-Qayyim, Al-Waabilus-Sayyib min Kalimit-Tayyib (pp.78-82)



Cleaning the Heart: *Dhikr*

- “Remember Me and I will remember you.” *Qur'an 2:152*
- “...and remember your Lord much and glorify Him in the evening and in the early morning.” *Qur'an 3:41*
- “Those who remember Allah while standing, sitting, and lying on their sides...” *Qur'an 3:191*
- “Those who believe, and whose hearts find their rest in the remembrance of Allah—for, verily, in the remembrance of Allah hearts do find their rest.” *Qur'an 13:28*
- “...and men who remember Allah much and women who remember Him...” *Qur'an 33: 35*
- “O you who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance; and glorify Him morning and evening.” *Qur'an 33: 41 - 42*
- **“The difference between the one who makes dhikr and the one who doesn't make dhikr is like the difference between the living and the dead.”** *Narrated by Bukhari*
- **“As my servant thinks about Me so will I be for him. I am with him if he will remember Me. If he calls on Me in himself I will call him in Myself, and if he calls on Me in a group of people, I mention him in a better group in My presence. If he approaches Me one hand-span, I will approach him one arm's length; if he approaches Me one arm's length, I will approach him by a cubit; if he comes to Me walking, I will come to him running.”** *Narrated by Bukhari and Muslim*

Cleaning the Heart: *Tadabbur*



أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا ﴿٢٤﴾

“Then do they not reflect upon the Qur'an, or are there locks upon [their] hearts?” *Qur'an 47:24*

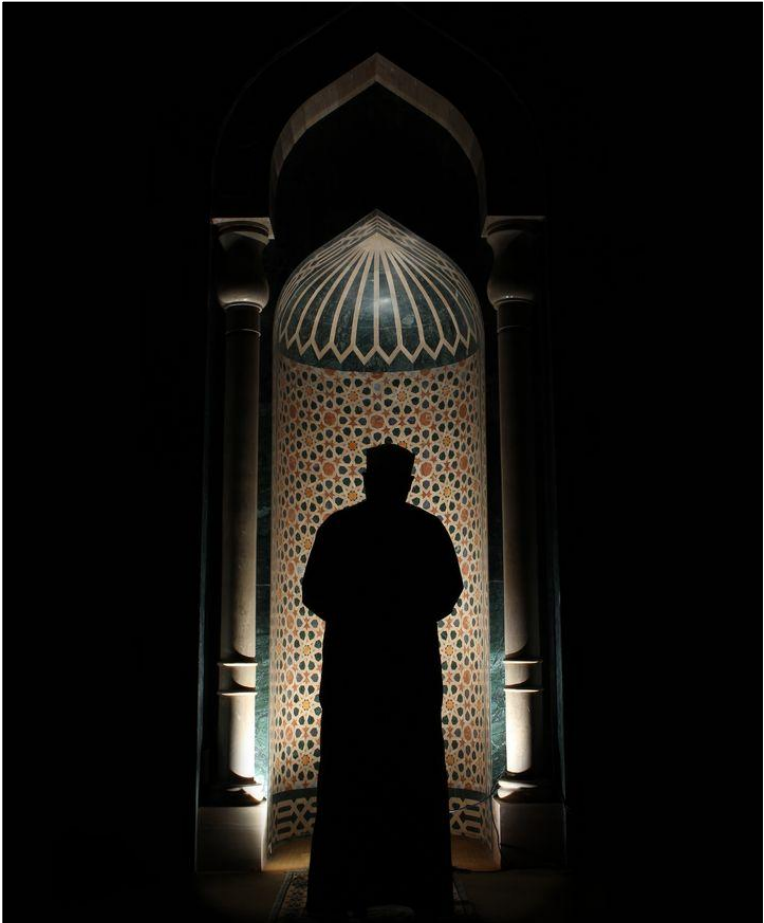
Cleaning the Heart: *Tadabbur*



The more tadabbur you do the more your heart becomes unlocked:

- The root word of “tafsīr” translates to “to uncover, to explain, to clarify”. The technical definition of it is **to uncover and explain the meanings of the miraculous words of the Qur’ān, as intended by Allāh.**
- The next word to define is “tadabbur”, which comes from “dubr”, that is: the back or end of something. It is often defined as pondering or reflecting over the Qur’ān, as you reach the end of a verse and then revisit it repeatedly, extracting benefits from it.
- Every verse of the Qur’ān contains guidance. **Tadabbur is to search out that guidance and objective behind the message of each verse.**

Cleaning the Heart: *The Night Prayer*



Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger ﷺ as saying:

“Our Lord descends to the lowest heaven in the last third of every night, and he says: Who is calling upon me that I may answer him? Who is asking from me that I may give him? Who is seeking my forgiveness that I may forgive him?”

Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 758

10. Dua

Dua is the Weapon of the Believer



“Dua and the seeking of protection from Allah are like weapons, but the sharpness of a weapon is not sufficient for it to cause effect, for the person that handles it also plays a role. So whenever the weapon is a perfect one, having no flaw in it, and the forearm is strong, and there are no preventing factors, then it will cause an effect on the enemy....”

Ibn al-Qayyim, Al-Dā'wa al-Dawā'

Dua to separate between truth and that which resembles it

اللَّهُمَّ أَرِنَا الْحَقَّ حَقًّا وَارْزُقْنَا اتِّبَاعَهُ، وَأَرِنَا الْبَاطِلَ بَاطِلًا وَارْزُقْنَا اجْتِنَابَهُ

Al-Buhuti reported: Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, said, “**O Allah, show me the truth as truth and guide me to follow it. Show me the falsehood as falsehood and guide me to avoid it.**”

Source: Sharḥ al-Muntahá al-Irādāt 3/497

Supplications to fortify the Heart

يَا مُقَلِّبَ الْقُلُوبِ ثَبِّتْ قَلْبِي عَلَى دِينِكَ

“Oh turner of the hearts (Allah, the Most High), keep my heart firm on your religion.” *Authenticated by al-Albanee in al-Jaam’i as-Sagheer 1323/7988*

Supplications to fortify the Heart

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ الثَّبَاتَ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَالْعَزِيمَةَ عَلَى الرُّشْدِ وَأَسْأَلُكَ شُكْرَ نِعْمَتِكَ وَحُسْنَ عِبَادَتِكَ
وَأَسْأَلُكَ قَلْبًا سَلِيمًا وَلِسَانًا صَادِقًا وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ خَيْرِ مَا تَعْلَمُ وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا تَعْلَمُ وَأَسْتَغْفِرُكَ
لِمَا تَعْلَمُ

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to say in his prayer: “O Allah, I ask You for steadfastness in all my affairs and determination in following the right path, I ask You to make me thankful for Your blessings and to make me worship You properly. I ask You for a sound heart and a truthful tongue. I ask You for the best of what You know and I seek refuge in You from the worst of what You know and I seek Your forgiveness for what You know.” *Sunan an-Nasa'i 1304 (Hasan)*

Comprehensive Qur'anic Dua related to Doubts

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ

الْوَهَّابُ ٨

“Our Lord, let not our hearts deviate after You have guided us and grant us from Yourself mercy. Indeed, You are the Bestower.” *Qur'an 3:8*

Comprehensive Qur'anic Dua related to Doubts

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ
وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَبَهَ مِنْهُ
ابْتَغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتَغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ ۚ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ
فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ ءَامَنَّا بِهِ ۚ كُلٌّ مِّنْ عِندِ رَبِّنَا وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٧﴾

“It is He who has sent down to you, [O Muhammad], the Book; in it are verses [that are] precise - they are the foundation of the Book - and others unspecific. As for those in whose hearts is deviation [from truth], they will follow that of it which is unspecific, seeking discord and seeking an interpretation [suitable to them]. And no one knows its [true] interpretation except Allah . But those firm in knowledge say, “We believe in it. All [of it] is from our Lord.” And no one will be reminded except those of understanding.” *Qur'an 3:7*

Relevant Qur'anic Duas

- “Guide us to the straight path. The path that You have bestowed Your favor upon, not (the path) of those who have earned anger, nor those who have gone astray.” *Qur'an 1: 6 - 7*
- “Our Lord! We have heard the caller to ‘true’ belief, ‘proclaiming,’ ‘Believe in your Lord ‘alone’,’ so we believed. Our Lord! Forgive our sins, absolve us of our misdeeds, and allow us ‘each’ to die as one of the virtuous.” *Qur'an 3:193*
- “Our Lord! Shower us with perseverance, and let us die while submitting ‘to You’.” *Qur'an 7:126*
- “Our Lord! Grant us mercy from Yourself and guide us rightly through our ordeal.” *Qur'an 18:10*
- “Our Lord! We believe in Your revelations and follow the messenger, so count us among those who bear witness.” *Qur'an 3:53*
- “My Lord! Make me and those ‘believers’ of my descendants keep up prayer. Our Lord! Accept my prayers.” *Qur'an 14:40*

Relevant Sunnah Duas

- The Prophet ﷺ said: “There is no Muslim - or no person, or slave (of Allah) - who says, in the morning and evening: **‘I am content with Allah as my Lord, Islam as my religion and Muhammad as my Prophet’**, but he will have a promise from Allah to make him pleased on the Day of Resurrection.” *Sunan Ibn Majah 3870 (Hasan)*
- “O Allah, I ask You for Your love and the love of those who love You and love of the action which will make me reach Your love.” *Tirmidhi #3490 (Hasan Ghareeb)*
- Zaid bin Arqam narrated that the Prophet ﷺ used to supplicate: “O Allah, I seek refuge in You from knowledge which does not benefit, from a heart that does not entertain the fear (of Allah), from a soul that is not satisfied and the supplication that is not answered.” *Sahih Muslim*